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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/531,786	04/18/2005	Martin J. Weinstein	PB0288	3882
22840	7590	10/10/2007	EXAMINER	
GE HEALTHCARE BIO-SCIENCES CORP. PATENT DEPARTMENT 800 CENTENNIAL AVENUE PISCATAWAY, NJ 08855			MENON, KRISHNAN S	
		ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER	
		1797		
		MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE	
		10/10/2007	PAPER	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/531,786	WEINSTEIN ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Krishnan S. Menon	1797

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 18 April 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Claims 1-10 are pending as originally filed

Drawings

End plate 12 in the figures shows the feed/retentate/filtrate ports, whereas the specification describes them as on end plate no. 13. Also, reference numerals in the figures do not match with that of the corresponding descriptions in the specification at many places. Correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Latour et al (US 4,849,102) and/or Friedman (US 4,715,955).

Claim interpretation: The preamble of claim 1 recites a filtration housing for accommodating filtration cassettes, but also describes the details of the cassettes. It is unclear what applicant intended to claim: the filtration housing or the combination of cassettes and the housing? The broadest reasonable interpretation of the claim, the filtration housing, is being considered for examination. Details of the cassette recited are assumed as for explanation purpose only.

Latour teaches a filtration housing and cassette assembly (12, see figures), in which the housing comprises first and second parallel plates (11,13,14), plate 11 having feed inlet (19) and retentate outlet (20) channels at opposite edges, and filtrate channels (21,22) having first portions (49,50) and second transverse portions (connecting 49 to 54 and 50 to 52) as claimed. These channels communicate with the respective feed, retentate and filtrate channels of the cassettes. The plates are movable on frames to change the number of cassettes loaded as desired.

The teaching of the reference differs from the claims in the 'acute' orientation of the channels, and on filtrate outlet being on a major sidewall. The plate (11) of Latour is also a central plate (communication to the filter cassettes from both major surfaces), whereas the applicant depicts it as an end plate (communication to the cassettes only from one major surface). Latour refers to Friedman and teaches his design as an improvement over that of Friedman, who has the plate with inlet and outlet channels at and end. However, such differences are only obvious design changes in shape and orientation, which one of ordinary skill in the art is capable of; and are not patentable unless can be shown otherwise. Changes of size, shape, etc without special functional significance are not patentable. Research Corp. v. Nasco Industries, Inc., 501 F2d 358, 182 USPQ 449 (CA 7), cert. denied 184 USPQ 193; 43 USLW 3359 (1974).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Krishnan S. Menon whose telephone number is 571-272-1143. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David R. Sample can be reached on 571-272-1376. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



K S Menon
Krishnan S Menon
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1797